

THE BIBLE

In the Last One Hundred Years.

AN

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

FOR THE

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

IN THE

UNITED STATES CENTENNIAL.

1876.

OUR TREASURE AND OUR TRUST:

OR,

The Bible in the Last One Hundred Years.

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IN THE UNITED STATES CENTENNIAL,

1776—1876.

DELIVERED AT ITS SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY, IN THE FIFTH AVENUE
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THE ARCH STREET METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
PHILADELPHIA, MAY 14, 1876.

BY WILLIAM J. R. TAYLOR, D.D.,

PASTOR OF THE CLINTON AVENUE REFORMED CHURCH, NEWARK N. J.

NEW YORK:

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY,

INSTITUTED IN THE YEAR MDCCCXVI.

1876.

[FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE ON ANNIVERSARIES, NOVEMBER 3d, 1875.]

In view of the fact that in the year 1876 the attention of the nation will be largely directed to its development and progress during the last century, the Committee deem it advisable that a Historical Discourse, reviewing the results accomplished through the agency of this Society in translating, publishing, and circulating the word of God, should be prepared by some distinguished clergyman, and preached in this city and Philadelphia.

Resolved, That Rev. W. J. R. Taylor, D.D., be invited to perform this service.

[FROM THE MINUTES OF THE SOCIETY, MAY 11, 1876.]

At the Annual Meeting of the American Bible Society, held at the Bible House this day, the following resolution was offered by Rev. M. S. Hutton, D.D., and unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the thanks of this Society be tendered to the Rev. William J. R. Taylor, D.D., for the very valuable and interesting Historical Discourse delivered by him in this city on Sunday evening last, and that a copy be requested for publication.

THE BIBLE

IN THE LAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS.

ROMANS iii. 1, 2.—“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.”

THE Apostle declares that the chief advantage of the Jew over the Gentile was that to him were entrusted “the oracles of God.” The Roman Christians knew how the pagan oracles were revered by the heathen among whom they dwelt. It mattered not how ambiguous the Delphic Pythoness might be, as she sat over the intoxicating vapours that rose from the fissured rock on which her tripod rested, or how uncertain were the responses of the wily priest who spake for the gods beneath the great oak of Dodona. For ages no great thing was done without first consulting the oracle. Princes and kings sent their embassies and gifts; and costly sacrifices and implicit devotion attested the faith of rulers and people in this method of ascertaining the will of their deities.

Pagan Oracles.

But far more precious to the Jew were those “oracles of God” by which Jehovah spake to the fathers and their children in audible voices, by Urim and Thummim, from the Shekinah, at the burning bush, on the thundering mountain, out of the pillar of cloud and of fire, and from the Holy of holies. Greater still were those written revelations, “the

The Oracles of
God.

Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms," which made them "first among the nations," the covenant people, the possessors of the only true religion, the worshippers of the only true God, and the trustees of the inspired word for themselves and for the world. That trust they have faithfully discharged, and for it the world is their everlasting debtor.

But "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Apostles and Evangelists have given us "the words of the Lord Jesus," and the Holy Ghost has sent forth in imperishable forms that New Testament which completes "the oracles of God."

They speak to us of Him and for Him; they teach us how to speak to Him in the endless dialogue between God and man. They speak in language so simple, in revelations so many and in thoughts so great that "he may run that readeth." Whatever may be obscure, however deep "the mystery of God," no faltering voices leave us uncertain as to our duty and our destiny, our ruin and our redemption. The Bible carries with it the promise of the power and "demonstration of the Spirit." It is "the revelation of Jesus Christ" by the Holy Comforter. It is the inspiration of the Eternal Spirit acting upon human spirits in all ages, lands, and races. It is the written word, filled with "the thoughts of God" towards us, enlightening, renewing, reforming, purifying, saving men, and so lifting up the nations into the plane of the highest Christian civilization. It is this commingling of the divine and the human in the written word and in Christ Jesus, "the Word [who] was made flesh and dwelt among us," which makes the whole Bible the Book for mankind. And so, what was once the possession of a single little nation on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, "has gone out into all the earth" from that ancient centre of population and of power, until now many nations have this treasure in their own keeping.

In this Centennial year of our history as a separate and independent nationality, and amid the many contrasts of our International Exhibition, thoughtful men may well ask, "What advantage then hath" the American? "or what profit is there" in constitutional government and in republican institutions? If this Centenary is to end only in the proud boastings of self-complacent political atheism, our ruin may be as near as that of the doomed king, when he said, "Is not this great Babylon which I have built?" But if we are to be lifted above the shame which has dimmed our glory, and to find out "a more excellent way," we must follow those principles and providences by which God has made us one people and has set us to work out the vast experiments of freedom, law, and faith. With a continent for our domain, we are living upon our inheritance from past ages and from lands beyond the seas. And that we may know our "time of visitation," let us consult "the oracles of God." I therefore ask you to consider

Advantage and
profit.

OUR TREASURE AND OUR TRUST,

hoping to show you how completely the Bible, as a priceless gift and as a sacred deposit, is inwrought with our national origin, history, character, and destiny; and how conspicuous is the place to which it is entitled amid the memorials of our Centennial celebration.

I. OUR TREASURE.

Our chief treasure is not the gold of California, nor the silver of Nevada, nor the vast coal measures that belt the States, nor all of our material wealth, nor yet the enterprise of our people, the commerce of our waters, the traffic of our railways, the harvests of our soil, the manufactures of industry and skill, and the colossal fortunes of our millionaires. The red men once owned more of this continent than we do now. Mexico and Peru are richer in the precious metals than our mining regions. Brazil

equals if she does not exceed us in territory. What has made us to differ? "What advantage, then," have we? "Much, every way: chiefly, because that unto us were committed the oracles of God." That is the answer of our history and liberty. It were as easy to tear up Mount Sinai from its wilderness, or to take out the laws of Moses from the civil polity of the Hebrews, or to dis sever the temple from their history, as to eliminate the Bible from our American annals, our historical character, and our national distinction.

How did we get this Treasure? Our forefathers brought it with their families, schools, and churches. It came with Puritan and Cavalier, with Huguenot, Walloon, and Hollander; with Swede and Dane and German. It came in merchant vessels and in ships-of-war, with discoverers and adventurers, with soldiers and sailors, with colonists, travellers, and traders. It came with Sir Walter Raleigh, and Governor Winslow, and Hendrick Hudson, and Peter Stuyvesant, and William Penn, and Roger Williams. It came with the Independent, the Presbyterian, the Quaker, the Baptist, the Church of England, and the Reformed Church of the Continent. It came with liberty and law, with the love of God and the love of man, and with the compact made by the Pilgrims in the cabin of the Mayflower—"For the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith, and honour of their king and country, to plant the first colony." It brought with it that first, that typical American Sabbath which those colonists kept so holy on the wintry coast, before they had a hut or a tent in which to dwell. It came when

How the Treas-
ure came.

"Amid the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea,
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
With the anthem of the free."

It was their only rule of faith, the inspiration of their freedom, the principle of their laws, the foundation of their local governments, the one book which shaped their char-

acter, their worship, and their citizenship. It had produced the Reformation; it had revolutionized Europe; it had kindled the flames of civil and religious liberty; and, more than any other thing, it sent hither those who "sought a faith's pure shrine," and in that faith laid the foundations of this Christian republic.

When did it come? The Protestant Anglo-Saxon colonization of this land began just after the present Authorized Version of our English Bible had been published. When the Treasure came. The Continental immigrants brought with them those versions of the sacred Scriptures with which the Reformation had made its way against the empire of Charles the Fifth, the tyranny of the "Grand Monarque," through the blood of St. Bartholomew's day, and the revolt of the Netherlands against Philip the Second and the Inquisition. Then and so came to us "the glorious gospel of the blessed God," red-lettered with the blood of the witnesses and illuminated by the fires of persecution. It came, too, while Britain was yet aglow with the splendors of that golden age which gave us Shakspeare, Bacon, and Milton, and which fixed the standard of our English tongue by our English Bible.

Yet it is a memorable fact, that every Bible in the English language which America possessed before the revolutionary war, had been brought across the Atlantic ocean. John Eliot had indeed translated the entire Scriptures into the language of the Massachusetts Indians, and published editions Dependence on the Mother Country. in 1663 and 1685, and three editions of Martin Luther's version had been published (1743, 1762, 1776,) at Germantown, near Philadelphia; but so oppressive was the monopoly which the government of England held over the word of God, that it never did give any authority to publish it outside of her seagirt isle. As early as 1688, William Bradford, of Philadelphia, issued proposals to publish "a large house Bible," but it never was done. The first English Bible which appeared on this side of the ocean was published by Robert Aitken of Philadelphia, in 1782, his

proposals for its issue being dated in 1781, and its actual publication being after the battle of Yorktown and before the peace of 1783. It was our Biblical Declaration of Independence—one of the firstfruits of the Revolution—and bears upon its fly-leaf the resolution by which the first Congress, officially, “recommended this edition of the Bible to the inhabitants of the United States.” The same hands that broke the fetters of the colonies struck off the chains from the Bible, and from that day “the word of God has not been bound” in these United States.*

* We insert the action of Congress, as a memorial of this Centennial period:—

BY THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

September 12, 1782.

The Committee to whom was referred a Memorial of Robert Aitken, printer, dated 21st January, 1781, respecting an edition of the Holy Scriptures, report: That Mr. Aitken has, at a great expense, now finished an American edition of the Holy Scriptures in English; that the Committee have from time to time attended to his progress in the work; that they also recommended it to the two chaplains of Congress to examine and give their opinion of the execution, who have accordingly reported thereon; the recommendation and report being as follows:

PHILADELPHIA, 1st *September*, 1782.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN:

Our knowledge of your piety and public spirit leads us without apology to recommend to your particular attention the edition of the Holy Scriptures publishing by Mr. Aitken. He undertook this expensive work at a time when, from the circumstances of the war, an English edition of the Bible could not be imported, nor any opinion formed how long the obstruction might continue. On this account particularly, he desires applause and encouragement. We therefore wish you, reverend gentlemen, to examine the execution of the work, and if approved, to give it the sanction of your judgment and the weight of your recommendation.

We are, with very great respect, your most obedient humble servants,

[Signed,]

JAMES DUANE, *Chairman*,
in behalf of a Committee of Congress
on Mr. Aitken's Memorial.

Reverend Doctor White and Reverend Mr. Duffield,
Chaplains of the United States in Congress Assembled.

But previous to this, in 1777, upon the memorial of Dr. Patrick Allison, a distinguished Presbyterian minister of Baltimore, to the Continental Congress, then in session in that city, a recommendation was reported by a committee of that body, to import twenty thousand Bibles from Holland, Scotland, or elsewhere, to supply the public destitution of the Scriptures occasioned by the war. It is not certain that this recommendation was ever carried into effect. But these two interesting facts in the biblical history of that period show how great a hold the Scriptures had upon the hearts of the people and upon their representatives during the progress and at the close of the struggle for independence. Here the action of the government properly ceased, and

Approval of
Congress.

Report.

GENTLEMEN :

Agreeably to your desire, we have paid attention to Mr. Robert Aitken's impression of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Having selected and examined a variety of passages throughout the work, we are of opinion that it is executed with great accuracy as to the sense, and with as few grammatical and typographical errors as could be expected in an undertaking of such magnitude. Being ourselves witnesses of the demand for this invaluable book, we rejoice in the present prospect of a supply ; hoping that it will prove as advantageous as it is honourable to the gentleman who has exerted himself to furnish it at the evident risk of private fortune.

We are, gentlemen, your very respectful and humble servants,

[Signed,]

WILLIAM WHITE,
GEORGE DUFFIELD.

Philadelphia, Sept. 10, 1782.

Honourable James Duane, Esquire, Chairman,
and the other honourable gentlemen of the Committee of
Congress on Mr. Aitken's Memorial.

Whereupon, *Resolved*, That the United States in Congress assembled, highly approve the pious and laudable undertaking of Mr. Aitken, as subservient to the interest of religion, as well as an instance of the progress of arts in this country, and being satisfied from the above report of his care and accuracy in the execution of the work, they recommend this edition of the Bible to the inhabitants of the United States, and hereby authorize him to publish this recommendation in the manner he shall think proper.

CHAS. THOMSON, *Secretary.*

the circulation of the Scriptures was left entirely to the people.

When a pagan ambassador asked Queen Victoria the reason of the pre-eminence of her realm over that of his monarch, she gave him a Bible, saying, "This is the secret of Britain's greatness." Our International Exposi-

The Bible in the
Exposition. tion would be criminally incomplete, did it not include the Holy Bible, in its many lan-

guages and forms. In those vast buildings there is nothing so great, nothing so pure, nothing so creative, nothing so preservative, nothing so inspiring, nothing so enduring, as this Book of books. Those multitudes of material things are "of the earth, earthy"—this is from heaven; those are the productions of human genius and skill—this is from God. Those things are made—this is revealed, inspired, supernatural, miraculous. Those things are the pride of nations—this is their salvation. There "the ends of the earth" come together, bringing from "the gorgeous East," "the wealth of Ormus or of Ind," "barbaric pearl and gold," and treasures from almost every land and clime. Here, "more precious than fine gold" are the laws of God, the visions of prophecy, the sweet gospel of Jesus Christ, the revelations of "the new heavens and the new earth;" and all printed in type fitly named of "agate" and "pearl" and "ruby" and "diamond." Merely as specimens of skill in the art of book-making, and as illustrations of the learning and the linguistic advances of our times, in contrast with the old black-letter tomes and the illuminated manuscripts of ancient days, those Bibles, standing in the centre of the department assigned to the literature of the world, declare their relation to all of the best achievements of the human mind. But surrounded as they are by the almost endless varieties of the material products of modern civilization, they remind us that our greatness lies not merely in the arts and sciences and industries of the age, not in the outward forms of our civic advancement, not even in the national prowess and progress which are so

splendidly illustrated by the government of the United States in its great building which shows to the world that

“Peace hath her victories
Not less renowned than war:”—

but in the providence and goodness of Him whose “gentleness hath made us great.” Apart from this, all else in that wonder-land is but the vain show of our mortal state, “the fashion of the world which passeth away.” But for that Book, this greatest of the world’s Exhibitions would have been impossible. It could not take place in Mexico, nor in Asia, nor in any other country that has not a high Christian civilization and an open Bible, and that freedom which gives full scope to the “wisdom” which “dwells with prudence, and findeth out knowledge of witty inventions.”—(Prov. viii. 12.) Better still, here is the inspiration of

“That Shepherd who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning, how the heavens and earth
Rose out of chaos.”

And above all the noises of that complicated machinery, and the discords of those human tongues, we hear the rippling music of

“Siloa’s brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God.”

II. OUR TRUST.

What have we done with it for our own country and for the world?

We may answer this question chiefly by the contrasts of the last sixty and one hundred years—periods which respectively cover the history of the American Bible Society and of the United States. I shall speak

FIRST;—*Of the Bible in our own country.*

Sixty years ago, sixty American gentlemen, representing thirty-five local Bible societies in eleven States and the

District of Columbia, met in convention, in the consistory room of the old Reformed Dutch Church in Garden Street, New York, and after careful deliberation, unanimously adopted the constitution of the American Bible Society, and issued it with a powerful "Address to the People of the United States." The idea of forming such an organization was doubtless caught from the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in 1804. It gradually extended itself to the minds of a few Christian men. It was suggested in 1806 and 1807; but no actual movement was made until in December, 1808, the first Bible society on this continent was formed at Philadelphia, taking first the name of that city and afterward of Pennsylvania. Connecticut followed this good example in May, 1809; Massachusetts in July; and New Jersey, at Princeton, in the fall of the same year; and New York City in 1810. In 1816 there were some fifty or sixty societies scattered over the States, but they worked separately and alone, and with many hindrances in their limited spheres, with no central power, and no visible bond of union except the Bible itself.

May 8-11, 1816.

First Bible Society—1808.

But, as in the history of great discoveries, like that of the planet Neptune, and of great inventions, like the steam engine and the electric telegraph, so in great benevolent and religious movements, it often appears that the same essential principles, ends, and methods were simultaneously working in the minds of different men unbeknown to each other. It is God's way of preparing the world and the church for their best things. Thus there is good evidence to prove that the necessity of a national society for publishing and circulating the word of God was moving the souls of a few good men like the celebrated Samuel J. Mills and the Rev. Dr. Jedediah Morse, and that eminent statesman Dr. Elias Boudinot, for several years prior to the organization of the American Bible Society. But the project was doubted and discouraged by some and rejected

A National Society Needed.

by others, until public sentiment was concentrated in the Convention of 1816, which was called by the venerable President of the Bible Society of New Jersey, Dr. Boudinot, who, as the President of the Congress of the United States in 1783, had signed the treaty of peace with Great Britain, which secured the independence of this nation. It was, indeed, fitting that this illustrious man should become the instrument of divine Providence for founding this institution, after so many years of preparation. Sickness alone prevented his presence at the Convention which he had called, but the Society honoured itself by honouring him, by its unanimous voice, as its first President, an office which he dignified and blessed until his death, which occurred five years later.

In that Convention there were revolutionary patriots, soldiers, and statesmen; judges, lawyers, merchants, authors, clergymen; presidents and professors of colleges and theological seminaries; the most eminent surgeon of his generation; and plain, untitled citizens. There were Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists, Reformed Dutch, Congregationalists, Friends; and Dr. Morse, who was a member, says, "Roman Catholics among the rest."* But among them all there was not a dissenting voice; and so great was the Christian harmony and love, that "some of those least affected could not help crying out, 'This is none other than the work of God.'" Like the union of these States, it was not of man, but of God. It was not of the churches, but it was the irresistible overflow of the hearts of noble minded Christian men, whom God had trained and prepared and drawn together by his word and Spirit to begin on this continent that new era of biblical diffusion which then first among us took national proportions for our country and the world. It was not an accident; it was a new birth. It was not made. It was like that "vine out of Egypt" for which God cast out the

The Convention
of May 8, 1816.

* See Bible Society Record, January 21, 1875, Vol. xx., No. 1, p. 2.

heathen “and planted it. He prepared room before it, and caused it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.”—(Psalm lxxx. 8–10.)

Now mark some of the instructive contrasts which are illustrated by the work of this Society, for, as it has been truly said, “There are no contrasts like those of Christianity.”

Sixty years ago the population of the United States was only eight millions; the country was exhausted by the second war with Great Britain; west of the Alleghanies and the Ohio there was but a sparse settlement, and beyond the Mississippi there lay an almost unbroken wilderness. Excepting the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which was formed in 1810, there was no national Christian institution which offered a basis for union and co-operation for the work of home and foreign evangelization. Each religious denomination took its own way amid many difficulties. All of our great benevolent Christian enterprises date from a later period. Shortly after the establishment of the first depot of this Society in a small room in Hanover Street, New York, near the present custom-house, a member of the Board astonished his friend by exclaiming, “I verily believe that I shall live to see all the shelves in this room filled with Bibles and Testaments.” He lived a half century longer, to see our great Bible House in the centre of the metropolis, sending forth Bibles and Testaments by the million, and sheltering within its walls the representatives of many of the great charities and evangelizing institutions which have sprung up around it—a proper type of the Book and of the work for which it exists.

One hundred years ago the cheapest English Bible in this country cost not less than two dollars, and sixty years ago the price was little less, and the styles and sizes of the books were poorly fitted for general circulation. Now the Bible is the cheapest of

The Former Days.

The Cost of Bibles.

books, and of every form that necessity, convenience, and taste may demand.

At the beginning of the century the whole number of Bibles in the world was not much more than four millions; and this included the book in ^{Number of Bibles.} all lands and languages since the invention of the art of printing. Now the number of editions is past counting, and there are more copies of it in the English language than in all other human tongues together. Bible societies alone have published over one hundred and forty-one millions of volumes since 1804, of which the British and Foreign Bible Society, in its seventy-two years, have issued seventy-six millions four hundred thousand copies, and the American Bible Society, in its threescore years, thirty-three millions, one hundred and twenty-five thousand, seven hundred and thirty-six copies. The total issues of these two societies alone have been one hundred and nine millions, five hundred and twenty-five thousand, seven hundred and thirty-six volumes of the word of God.

In the first year of our Society's existence its receipts were \$37,799 35, which included the princely gift of \$10,000 by its great founder, the first President. The aggregate sum of its receipts from all sources has been \$17,229,142 31.

Before its organization, in 1816, the distribution of the Scriptures throughout our country had been made at first by individuals, families, ^{Early Distribution} ministers, and churches. ^{of Bibles.} Then followed the active efforts of the few local Bible societies whose formation we have noticed, and whose efforts developed the destitutions which they could only partially supply.

The most remarkable work of this kind of which record is made, was done by the Rev. Messrs. Samuel J. Mills and Daniel Smith, in the years 1814 and 1815, in the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi, from Pittsburg to New Orleans and other parts of Louisiana. It seems strange at this day to read from their report how the door of their dwelling in New Orleans, "on a Sabbath day, from ten

to one o'clock, was thronged with from fifty to one hundred persons, of all ages and colours, and literally clamorous in their solicitations for the Testament. Such an assembly for such a purpose was never before witnessed in Louisiana." Thousands of French Testaments were circulated by these pioneer Bible men among the Roman Catholics in the French settlements in that great territory. I have specified this noble voluntary mission because it fired the soul of the sainted Mills with his ceaseless zeal for the formation of a national Bible society, and was one of the providential preparations which we have noticed for the establishment of this institution.

Threescore years ago, when the tides of foreign immigration were setting in larger billows upon our shores, there was no provision for furnishing the word of God to the incoming strangers. But for many years past scarcely a vessel has left or entered our ports to whose officers, crew, and passengers the Bible has not been offered in their native tongues; and it has followed the pilgrims wherever they have settled or roved.

In those early days, when Sabbath schools were new and the public school system was in its infancy, few of the children of America possessed any Bibles or Testaments of their own. But education has produced a ceaseless demand for School Bibles and School Testaments for reading, study, rewards, and home use. The Bible, more than any other thing, has always awakened a thirst for knowledge and has made education a public necessity; while education, in its turn, has created a demand for the cultivation of the moral and religious nature by the precepts and examples of the word of God. It is to the honour of the American Bible Society that it has done what it could, by its almost unlimited circulation in the cheapest forms, to keep the Bible in the schools, where the children of America are trained for citizenship, and to frustrate the ecclesiastico-political conspiracy which now boldly aims

Provision for
Immigrants.

The Bible for
Schools.

not only to drive out the Bible from the schools of which it has been the chief creator, but to destroy the public school system itself. And now that the international Sunday school lessons have become almost universal, new and continual supplies of the word are more than ever required to meet these auspicious wants of the age.

When this Society began its course there was not in all the world a sentence of Holy Writ printed in raised letters for the blind. It is only thirty ^{Raised Letters for the Blind.} years since the whole New Testament was published, in four volumes, through the efforts of that distinguished philanthropist, the late Dr. Samuel G. Howe, of Boston, and by the united contributions of the Massachusetts and New York Female Bible Societies, supplemented by the aid of this institution. The Psalms were issued in 1839, and the entire Bible in eight and sixteen volumes, folio, was finally published in 1845. Thousands of new readers, of a class which was previously shut out, except by hearing, from the word of God, have been developed by this munificent work. More than eleven thousand volumes have been issued, most of which have been given away to pupils educated in the asylums of thirty-one States of the Union. It also marks the beginning of a new era in missions that we have conferred this priceless boon, in parts of the Scriptures, upon the sightless readers of Syria and Egypt and others of the Arabic-speaking races.

When this Society was formed, the world was at peace, and it seemed almost as if the last battle had been fought when the foremost monarchs and princes of Europe "were gathering their fairest honours from spreading abroad the oracles of the Lord our God." But it was only the truce before a half century of more fearful conflicts in which the friends of the Bible found new ^{The Bible for Soldiers.} opportunities. While the Mexican war was in progress, the word of God was freely given to our soldiers and sailors, and to Mexicans and Spaniards. It followed in the wake of the armies, and one result of that work was

the Bible agency in Mexico and a sowing of the seed in that hard soil which has never ceased in the past thirty years.

When the Crimea was in the flames which were kindled at the gates of the church of the Holy Sepulchre and were quenched in the carnage of the Malakoff, our devoted Agent in the Levant (the late Rev. Chester N. Righter), with the representatives of the British and Foreign Society, carried the word of life to English, French, Sardinian, German, Italian, Polish, and Russian soldiers, in camps, prisons, and hospitals.

And when at length our own great agony came upon us during those few dreadful years, this "glorious gospel of the blessed God" was given, almost without measure, to every army and fleet that could be reached. Before a battle was fought the Board of Managers sounded the trumpet to all of its auxiliaries and friends, entreating them to see that every soldier enlisted within their bounds was supplied with a copy of the Scriptures, in whole or in part, and encouraging them to look to the Parent Society for aid to supply their own lack in this service. From that moment the work began in earnest. The machinery flew with unwonted speed; new presses were procured; the sewers and binders wrought with nimble fingers; and the precious freight hastened over railways, rivers, lakes, gulfs, and oceans. At one period the production of New Testaments was nine per minute for every hour of the daily working time of the establishment. In

The Christian
Commission.

the first year, the military and naval distribution was between 650,000 and 700,000 volumes. The United States Christian Commission, that marvellous combination of philanthropy and the gospel, through its five thousand delegates, distributed 1,466,748 volumes (valued at \$179,824 90), all of which were donated to it in trust for the army and navy. At least three millions of volumes were distributed among the contending forces, of which not less than five hundred thousand volumes were donated and given personally to

Confederate soldiers within their own lines and to those who were prisoners of war. And the total issues of those four years were 5,684,279 volumes. Whatever else was bound by the stern laws of war, surely it was not "the word of God."

As soon as peace was restored, the Society renewed its work in the South. In one year its ten agents were busy in all but three of the Resupply of the South. once confederated States. The next year the whole field was reoccupied, including the State societies of Maryland and Louisiana, which were in active co-operation with the Parent Institution. Scarcely had the smoke of the last battle cleared away, when, in May, 1865, the Managers resolved "to do all in their power to give the Bible to the whole population of the South, at the earliest practicable period and in the most effective way."*

Connecting this with the Bible work of the war, it is not boasting, but the simple truth, to say that no such organized system of Bible distribution was ever before accomplished in all the world as this among the contending hosts on both sides of our great conflict, and in a region that was at once so immense and so prostrate. Nor is it too much honour for the word of God to claim that this distribution was in the highest interests of national peace and unity and of Christian brotherhood, and of the reunion of long sundered churches. This Centennial year would fail of its highest aims did it not strengthen those bonds which the passions of war could not destroy, and which ought to be kept in a peace that can never be broken.

An essential part of this great movement was the supply of the Freedmen with the Scriptures. It began with the first refugees who found Scriptures for the Freedmen. shelter within the Union military lines, then extended to the coloured troops, and gradually spread over the Southern States. It was made a strict condition of the

*Annual Report, 1865, p. 41.

restoration of the Bible work in every district by our agents and auxiliaries, and in grants of the Scriptures to missionary, educational, and church boards. The reports of the last twelve years show how extensively and with what charity this work has been promoted. The Gospel by John, and other volumes, have been specially published in large print for adult readers. Large donations have been cheerfully made, and nothing will be left undone to discharge our Trust of "the oracles of God" for this poor people, whose sudden emancipation and civil rights demand all that Christian education and the morals of the Bible can do to fit them for their citizenship, and to save them from ruin.

There have been three general efforts made to supply the whole population of the United States with the word of God, which were inaugurated in 1829, 1856, and 1866. The last was the thank-offering and memorial to God of our Jubilee year, and it has been the most extensive and thorough and prolonged of the Society's national works. Within the last decade, 5,454,788 families have been visited, of whom 541,569 were found destitute, and 376,257 were supplied with the Scriptures. This never ending work has demanded large grants and patient labour. It has quickened the Christian conscience, evoked great liberality, stimulated religious patriotism, and promoted Christian union and co-operation.

But beneath all its statistics and many incidents lies the historical fact that a nation's destiny is more powerfully shaped by its religious faith and condition than by all other causes put together. Many years ago a great statesman, then Governor of New York and afterward Secretary of State throughout our civil war, said, in an anniversary address before this Society, after a striking allusion to the purposes of the decennial census of the United States, that he "knew not how long a republican government could flourish among a people who had not the Bible. The experiment had never been tried; but this

The whole Coun-
try Canvassed.

he did know, that the existing government of this country could never have had an existence but for the Bible. And further, he did in his conscience believe that, if at every decade of years a copy of the Bible should be found in every family of the land, its republican institutions would be perpetual.”*

The reason is plain enough. The right of self-government is the pre-eminent idea of our republican institutions and of this centenary of free-
The Bible
Indispensable.
 dom. But personal self-government is essential to popular government. The power of Protestant Christianity, which has nursed this republic from its infancy to its manhood, is in its appeal, through the word of God, to the individual conscience. We have had one century of republican liberty because we have had the Bible and the Sabbath. These two cannot be severed. If the efforts that are now making to destroy the Sabbath and its divine law should be successful, the flags of all nations that decorate the buildings of our World's Exposition would droop in shame for a people who have not the virtue to maintain the day and the book that have made their greatness. If we begin this second century by trampling the Bible and the Sabbath into the dust of our Centennial grounds, it needs no prophet to foretell how soon this “government of the people, by the people, and for the people, would perish from the earth.” Not only in this faith, but in the full belief that “the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth,” it is a question of political and of spiritual life or death whether or not this people shall have the Bible. Had not the Reformation been crushed out of France by her wicked kings and priests, and if the French Bible Society which was formed in London, in concert with Christian men in Paris, in 1792, could have had a career like that of Great Britain, she would have had a better history than that of her later papal and atheistic centuries. But it was too late. As

* Hon. Wm. H. Seward, 1839.

the French printer who had been engaged by this Society wrote, a few years later, "We have lived in times which have destroyed everything, overturned everything, and all must begin afresh." And the money which was raised for France furnished English Bibles for Ireland.*

If the edict of Henry the Eighth, which forbade the Bible to the common people of England, had prevailed until now, would her annals have been better than those of her ante-biblical times? Would these United States have been possible, and can they endure another century, without the word of God? Let history furnish the sure reply.

SECOND;—*Our Foreign Work.*

What have we done *for the world* in the execution of this Trust?

The foreign work of the American Bible Society began with its beginning. The spirit of missions is in the Book, and the great commission involves the duty of translating, publishing, and distributing the Scriptures among "all nations." The attention of the
 First Efforts. Managers was soon directed "to the translation of the Scriptures into the Indian languages of our country, the publication of the Spanish New Testament, and of the Scriptures in French." There was a singular propriety in this selection of the aborigines of America, of the nation of Columbus, Ferdinand and Isabella, and of that generous power which sent us her fleets and armies and her La Fayette, to aid us in getting our independence, as the first objects of our Bible work beyond our own people. With this movement, too, began our direct co-operation with American missions and with the British and Foreign Bible Society, which donated the stereotype plates for the French Bible.

One hundred years ago the modern era of biblical translation and diffusion had not even dawned upon Chris-

* Anderson's Annals of the English Bible, p. 469. American edition.

tian lands. In the year 1804 the Bible existed only in fifty ancient and modern languages. In 1875 the British and Foreign Bible Society reported that it has had a direct or indirect share in the translation, printing, and distribution of the Scriptures in two hundred and ten languages or dialects, the number of versions thus printed being two hundred and sixty-eight. The American Bible Society has printed the whole Bible or parts of it in thirty-three *new* translations, besides publishing it in twenty-three others, making together fifty-six different languages, in addition to its share in the circulation of many versions published by other societies. In a little tract which it has just issued, there is printed in more than one hundred and fifty different tongues that one verse which is the epitome of the gospel for all nations, John iii. 16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It was a grand saying of a devout writer, that "there are many languages of mortals; there is but one of the immortals." And as one looks into this little book, it seems as if the tongues which were confounded at Babel were already blending in the infinite harmonies of this hallelujah chorus of the Messiah.

In the pavilion erected by the Pennsylvania Bible Society on the grounds of the Centennial Exhibition, the Scriptures are offered for sale and gift in one hundred and four languages, many of which are spoken or read by exhibitors and visitors from many lands.

The book-case which illustrates the work of the American and of the British and Foreign Bible Societies in the Exposition is filled with specimens of the Scriptures in two hundred languages and dialects of the world. On one shelf is a series of bi-lingual volumes, containing, in parallel columns, the English with the German, Spanish, French, Welsh, Dutch, Portuguese, and Hawaiian languages. Do they not suggest the cloven tongues of Pentecost, and the

Contrasts of the
Century.

The Bible in the
Exposition.

relations of our English speech to all other speech of men in the world's religious progress? Three shelves are filled with the word in the languages of Europe—God's answer to the prayer of that "man of Macedonia" whom Paul, in the vision, heard crying out for the whole continent, "Come over and help us." Another interesting set of volumes tells what Christians have done to repay the children of Abraham, in books specially prepared for their use, for those "oracles of God" which we Gentiles have received from them complete and uncorrupted. Among them are the Old Testament in English, without note or comment, headings or references, and the Hebrew-Spanish Bible of Dr. Schauffler.

These open pages are in the soft-toned tongues of the Isles of the Pacific, which for more than eighteen centuries had waited for God's law. That goodly line of books with their singular intermixture of labials, liquids, consonants, and vowels, tells us of "Ethiopia stretching forth her hands unto God." These few volumes show what the largest Christian monarchy and the largest Christian republic, with the Atlantic rolling between them, have contributed to the largest empire of the globe, stretching across two continents, from the Reval-Esthonians on the Baltic sea-line to the modern Russ dwellers on the Amoor, in Eastern Siberia. "And these from the land of Sinim," in serried columns, tell what has been done for China's four hundred millions, in the early versions of Morrison and Marshman, in the later revisions of Bridgman and Culbertson and of the Board of Revisers, and in the Mandarin Colloquial, of which the New Testament has been translated by English and American missionaries, and the entire Old Testament has just been completed, after fifteen years of labour, by the Rev. Dr. Schereschewsky, of the American Episcopal Mission, and under the special patronage of this Society. The Manchou, the Mongolian, the Mandarin, the Romanized Colloquial (or the Chinese in Roman letters), and the varying dialects of the great seaports and provincial capitals

are there. Here, again, are the silent witnesses for the word in the multifarious languages of India, Burmah, Siam, and other Asiatic realms upon which “the true light now shineth.”

One other shelf is occupied with translations made in eleven distinct languages for the Indians of North America. Of these versions this Society has published nine, including that which is printed in the marvellous Cherokee character, which was invented by one of that nation. What if, in process of time, these Indian Scriptures should become as useless to living men as John Eliot’s great Bible, which he made for his little Natick tribe? Even then they will prove our fidelity to our trust; they will have done their blessed work for the red men; and they will but anticipate by a few ages the fate of every copy of the Bible which shall be in the world in that day when “the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.”

Ten years ago, at the Jubilee meeting of this Society, it was stated by the then senior Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Rev. Rufus Anderson, D.D.), that during the preceding half century “the entire Bible had been translated into thirty-nine languages outside of Christendom, embracing nearly all the more extensive and important; and the New Testament into thirty-five other tongues; and portions of the Scriptures into still forty-eight others;—making one hundred and twenty-two languages in the great field of Christian missions that have been enriched and ennobled with portions of the word of God since the American Bible Society commenced its operations. And not a few of these had to be reduced to a written form.”

Of these actual additions to the written languages of the world, the Hawaiian Scriptures may be given the first place, as they represent the entire system of the vernacular tongues of the Pacific. Some of the missionaries are yet living who helped to give

The Bible among
the
Unevangelized.

Hawaiian Bible.

the Hawaiians an alphabet and a written literature with Christian civilization and the gospel of Jesus Christ. It has been the privilege of this Society to furnish them with the whole Bible in family and other forms, and to aid the Hawaiian Board of Missions in sending the word of God to the far distant Micronesian group in four distinct languages.

Of the entire issues of Bible societies since 1804, it is safe to say that at least ten millions of copies of the word, in whole or in parts, have been distributed among the unevangelized nations. In consequence of its co-operation with missionary societies, the foreign distribution of this Society for nearly fifty years was not presented in statistics, which could not then be readily procured. But in the last thirteen years alone it has circulated 2,891,010 copies. Its whole expenditure upon this part of its work has been \$1,650,034; and within the last decade \$786,437 86, which is nearly equal to the entire cost of its foreign work in its first half century. Was ever so grand a work accomplished at a cost so small? Is not this progress of the Bible among the nations to be reckoned among the wonders of the century?

In this service the Society has had the zealous co-operation of missionary societies and of missionary scholars who were as manifestly raised up for it as Moses and Paul were predestined to fulfil their high callings. The hallowed names of Drs. Goodell, Eli Smith, Riggs, Schauffler, and Van Dyck, in the Turkish empire, and of their co-labourers in all quarters of the globe, have already taken rank with those of Luther, Diodati, Valera, and De Sacy on the Continent; of Wickliffe, Tyndale, and the later translators of our English version; and of Carey, Morrison, Judson, and their compeers in farther Asia, who have given the word of God to tribes and nations and races of mankind. Our own sympathies kindle with the enthusiasm of Dr. Goodell in finishing his translation of the Old Testament into the Armeno-Turkish, when he "corrected the last verse" with shoutings,

Extent of the
Work.

Translators and
Revisers.

“Grace, grace unto it!” And again, when he adds, “At the bottom of the page I wrote, ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.’ I then arose and shut up all the books that have been lying open before me these many years, and fell on my knees to ‘give thanks unto the name of the Lord, who hath not dealt with us after our sins;’ who hath given us his blessed word to be a lamp unto our feet, and whose wondrous love permits us to hold it up ‘to lighten every man that cometh into the world.’”

From the Bible House at Constantinople, that Pharos of the Orient, “the true light” is now shining forth in all the languages spoken in that “polyglot city.” Missionaries and colporteurs are carrying it into the provinces of European and Asiatic Turkey, to Greece and the islands of the Ægean Sea, among the mountains of Syria, over the plains of Persia, and up and down the Danube and the Nile. Turks and Egyptians, Armenians, Nestorians, Syrians, Bulgarians, Persians, Greeks, Copts, Arabs, and Jews read in their “own tongues the wonderful works of God.”

Bible House at
Constantinople.

The most conspicuous biblical enterprise ever undertaken by this Society for another race of men is the Arabic Bible, which occupied its translators, Dr. Eli Smith, who began it, until his decease, and Dr. Cornelius V. A. Van Dyck, and their co-labourers in its revision, for sixteen years, and which, in its various editions, has received the highest critical commendations of the most eminent Arabic scholars, both Mussulman and Christian. Finished just at the close of the late war, and its publication begun at the beginning of our Jubilee year, it was our peace offering and thank offering unto God for the salvation of one hundred and twenty millions of the world who speak that rich and difficult tongue. It is going forth daily alongside of the Koran of Mohammed, challenging criticism from the learned and disputing the dominion of that narrow, intolerant, exclusive book of one man’s brain, with its infinite variety and unity of truths, with its divine

Arabic Bible.

charity, and its voices of prophets and kings, evangelists and apostles, and with "the testimony of Jesus [which] is the spirit of prophecy."

I pause here to note one noble proof of the present freedom of the word of God and of the bonds of union between the two great Bible societies of the world. When the electrotypes of this Arabic Bible were finished, in 1866, the Board of Managers signalized the event by furnishing to the British and Foreign Bible Society, without charge, duplicate plates of the various editions that were in course of publication. This gift was officially "accompanied by the largest liberty for the free and unrestrained use of these plates, with their own imprint, conditional only that no alteration be made in the plates without the consent of this Society." In 1867 the British and Foreign Bible Society reciprocated this action, granting to its American sister duplicate plates of all of its vowelled editions of the same great work.

That Bible House on the Bosphorus and that printing house at Beirût will yet be more than a match for the Mosque of St. Sophia and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The régime of the harem cannot always withstand the influences of the Christian girls' school of Bebek and the biblical training of young men at Robert College. Every little mission church that now exists in Turkey, with the Bible for its oracle, has in it the germs of a Christian republic. And Christianity lives there by that divine charter which will outlast "the sick man's" despotism and the bloody outbreaks of Moslem frenzy.*

A learned Turk said not long ago to an eminent Christian physician in Constantinople, "We do not fear the

* Is it not a significant fact, announced by the Grand Vizier to the world, that the late Sultan has just been "dethroned by the universal will of the people?" Who knows to what extent that "voice of the people is the voice of God," saying, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him?"—(Ezekiel xxi. 27.)

Latin Church with its images, nor the Greek Church with its pictures and its ungainly and empty forms. These can do nothing to shake the hold which the Moslem faith has of the East. But we do fear, because we respect, your simple Protestant worship of God without any material representation or medium; and we dread the power and prevalence of your gospel, which presents God as love.”*

The latest new translation of the Bible for a people who have never before had it, is now proceeding in Japan, by American missionaries, Bible in Japan. under the patronage of this Society. Only the four gospels and the Epistle to the Romans are as yet in circulation. The special interest of this work is in the fact that it is for an empire which has never cultivated its own language and literature, and which is making almost incredible advances in the arts, learning, and movements of modern civilization, to which its doors were opened within a quarter of a century. It is the aim of the translators to give the Japanese a faithful version of the word of God, and also to make it a standard of their language, as our authorized version has long been for the English-speaking race. It is the precious seed-time of an awakening people in the dawn of a new civilization and of a new faith. Twenty-five years hence the Bible of Japan may be “the Book of books” for a nation which has just now, by imperial authority, adopted the Christian Sabbath as its weekly rest-day.

For many reasons, such as the difficulty of translation into heathen tongues, the opposition of rulers and priests, and the power of ignorance and Progress. superstition, the progress of the Bible in Pagan lands is slow at first, but when it gets headway it rushes like a torrent over all barriers. The English East India Company, in the days of Carey and Marshman and Judson, was as intolerant of missions as the Sultan. The government persecuted the native converts in Burmah, and drove out the

* Thompson's Holy Land, p. 358.

missionaries. It tolerated every form of religion but the Christianity of the Bible; and it even paid annual stipends from its treasury for the maintenance of idolatry. It protected Juggernaut, and it put the Cross under its ban. To-day the East India Company lives only in history, and Christianity is rapidly marching on to the conquest of India.*

Facts like these make their own commentary. We have only to remember the obstructions, persecutions, and martyrdoms through which our own Bible has reached its present power, to show what the enduring word shall yet

* A striking corroboration of these facts has been received, while this discourse was passing through the press, in the following extract from a letter of Sir Bartle Frere, who accompanied the Prince of Wales during his late tour through India. It was read by the Earl of Shaftesbury at the last anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, of which he is the President, and is worthy of special note as a "sign of the times." Under date of May 3, 1876, this eminent civilian writes:

"At different places, during his royal highness's tour, the prince received from various bodies copies of translations of the Holy Scriptures into, I believe, no less than eleven languages, and in, I think, no less than nine cases the translations comprised the whole Bible; and some of the most important portions of both Testaments were presented, which had been translated into nine other languages in which no complete translation of the whole Bible had yet been finished. This may afford some idea of the number of readers in India to whom the Holy Scriptures are now accessible in their own Indian dialect; and when I mention that of all these versions four only were, I believe, complete when I first went to India, forty-two years ago, we may have some idea of the great present activity of the Society's agents, in a great number of Missions, scattered through such a number of nations speaking so many different dialects.

"Then, as to the effect produced, apart from direct and entire conversions from other religions to Christianity, I may mention the fact, which struck me greatly, that I was assured from many quarters that many thousands of Hindoos, who do not make any profession of Christianity, habitually use books of the Old and New Testaments as their models in prayer and their standards of morality. I need not trouble you with comments on the fact, but I am sure that all friends of the Bible Society will rejoice to think that the devotional portions of the Bible, and the moral teachings of our Lord and his apostles, are largely read and deeply thought on by great bodies of their fellow-subjects who are still in search of a rule of life. Believe me, my dear sir,

"Very faithfully yours, "H. E. BARTLE FRERE."

accomplish in other lands. "The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform it."

It is an axiom in history that "a religion that does not propagate itself and its sacred books, is either dying or dead." But there is not another religion among men that has vitality enough to translate and publish its sacred books for all nations. Does any one in his senses believe that such an enterprise as that of our Arabic Bible could ever be projected by the believers in the Koran or the Vedas, to convert the world to Islamism or to Buddhism?

Whatever modern scholars may make out of the new science of comparative religions, it still remains true that a nation cannot rise above its gods, its worship, and its so-called "Scriptures." One of our most eloquent orators has concisely put the argument into this striking form, and I quote him, in substance, because he is not a clergyman but a secular agitator and reformer: * "The answer to the Shasters is India; the answer to Confucianism is China; the answer to the Koran is Turkey; the answer to the Bible is the Christian civilization of Protestant Europe and America." We may add, that the answer to Romanism is Spain and Mexico; and the answer to Atheism is the Reign of Terror in France and the Commune of Paris in her last siege. "Where there is no vision, the people perish."—(Prov. xxix. 18.)

It is the shame and the doom of the Roman Catholic missions, that they have never given the Bible to any heathen nation to which they have carried the Breviary and the Catechism, and the Lives of the Saints, images and holy water, the mass and the crucifix. As Boileau said, "They have lengthened the creed and shortened the decalogue." The late Cardinal Wiseman, in his famous Lectures on Roman Catholic and Protestant Missions, declared of the latter, "that the blessing of heaven is not upon the work, nor his approbation upon the principle—the all-sufficiency of the

Roman Catholic
and Protestant
Missions.

* Wendell Phillips.

written word." But it is the glory of Protestant Christianity in this missionary era, that it has already translated, printed, and circulated the Scriptures, without note or comment, in so many languages, and has put them in such numbers into the hands of the people of the earth, that the day has long since passed when the Bible could be either suppressed, or destroyed, or effectually hindered by persecuting kings, or priesthoods, or scoffers. Pio Nono himself, like Bunyan's giant in the cave, looks helplessly from the windows of the Vatican at the modest sign over the door of the Bible Society's depot; and the British and Foreign Bible Society has lately held a public meeting in Rome, unmolested, under the shadow of St. Peter's. "The Bible," said the illustrious Guizot, "has survived, and will ever triumphantly survive, human criticism, and Bible societies are but the instruments of the divine action, which it is not in the power of man to baffle or disturb." The Reformation in Catholic Europe was checked by the fact that "the word of God was bound" in those countries. It never reached the common people, as it did in Germany and the British isles. The hopes of Christianity for all papal, pagan, and Moslem nations are inseparable from their possession of the word of the Lord by their people in their own homes.

CONCLUSION.

This, then, is the "high calling" of this Society—"to encourage a wider circulation of the Scriptures without note or comment," in our own country and in all the world. God has committed his "oracles" chiefly to the trust of the two foremost colonizing, commercial, Protestant, evangelizing nations of the globe. The language which is most nearly the universal medium of international intercourse is that whose standard of purity and of power has been fixed by our English Bible. The great mechanical forces of modern civilization, coal, steam, electricity, and the printing press, are principally Protestant.

Civil and religious liberty are distinctively and almost only Protestant. The grandest missionary enterprises of the age are Protestant. The moral forces which are upheaving the Turkish empire, China and Japan, and that have made Australia and New Zealand and the Sandwich Islands Christian are Protestant. The power that has made Victoria "Empress of India" is Protestant. And, as Chillingworth said, "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants."

In this work of preparing and sending forth the pure word of the Lord to all nations, all Protestants stand upon common ground. "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it."—(Psalm lxviii. 11.) It is one of the strongest visible bonds of union between all who love the Bible. It is one form of the answer to the prayer of Jesus, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."—(John xvii. 21.) All minor differences are lost in the oneness and grandeur of this service, in the presence of the abominations of the heathen world. The most brilliant of modern historians, Lord Macaulay, felt this when, after his return from India, he declared, "I have lived too long in a country where the people worship cows to think much of the differences which part Christians from Christians." "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. iii. 17), and there, too, and there only, is "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—(Eph. iv. 3.)

Never have the friends of the Bible had less to fear, or more to encourage them, than at this good hour. No benevolent institution has a more powerful hold upon the Christian people of this country than this American Bible Society. The dead and the living have honoured it with their ceaseless services, gifts, and prayers. In war and in peace, in financial panics, and amid prostrate industries, Providence has led its officers and managers "by a way that they knew not." Nothing but criminal neglect and treason to its trust can forfeit the confidence which it has

enjoyed for threescore years. And whenever some new and greater biblical enterprise shall be undertaken, the past may show us how it will be sustained in the future.

It was fabled of one of the classic oracles, that whoever spent a single night amid the terrific visions of the Cave of Trophonius never smiled again. No such horrors mingle with the memories and forecasts of our national centenary. These "lively" "oracles of God" have brought our people to the cross of him who "hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." Wherever we may scatter them, and in whatever tongue, "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Let this work still go on, with ever growing power, to the music of David's Psalms, of Bethlehem's angels, and of the New Jerusalem. Let Christian America, "exalted to heaven" by this Bible, send forth the testimony of Jesus, which is "the Spirit of prophecy," until

"Arabia's desert ranger
To him shall bow the knee,
And Ethiopian stranger
His glory come and see."

For Christ and his kingdom, for his cross and his crown, for our homes and our schools, for our churches and our charities, for our laws and our liberties, for our country and the world, let us "hold forth the word of life" until "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."
—(Hab. ii. 14.)

